

a conference-summit on the challenges and advances in the empowerment of our communities to change the daily lives of Americans.

With a broad and exemplary series of panels and discussion sessions, the Urban League will continue its legendary service in support of raising awareness of the limited job opportunities, challenging health care costs, increasing economic and social disparities, and disappointing gaps in educational equality. The Urban League will not only highlight and question the challenges and limitations faced by communities across the county, but they will also propose and examine solutions for those communities.

For almost a century now, the Urban League has championed and advanced solutions to the crippling disparities that exist within our communities. They have long been involved with the struggle for equality and opportunity that faces the Black community, in particular, but economically disadvantaged groups nationwide.

In reaction to the Supreme Court's 1896 *Plessy v. Ferguson* decision approving segregation in the United States, Black Americans were quickly relegated to the most menial jobs, the poorest conditions of housing and health care, and the least access to quality education. Individuals, such as Mrs. Ruth Standish Brown and Dr. George Edmund Haynes, led the effort to adopt and prepare Black Americans for their economic struggles in urban America. Their efforts led the Committee on Urban Conditions, the Committee for the Improvement of Industrial Conditions Among Negroes, and the National League for the Protection of Colored Women to form the National League on Urban Conditions Among Negroes, later shortened to the National Urban League.

Since that merger of groups and interests, the National Urban League has been at the forefront of fighting for equal opportunities and treatment of Americans in this country. They have pursued public and private strategies designed to provide training, assistance, development and awareness programs about the struggles for equal treatment and opportunity. Working with Whites, Blacks, Hispanics, and Asians, the National Urban League has been a champion of the economic welfare of the disadvantaged.

Today, the League continues that legacy of championship for economic justice. They continue to provide useful information to policy-makers in their evaluation and development of programs to aid the poor. They continue to inform the community of mechanisms to overcome the challenges that lay before them. They continue to be an advocate for the poor, an information-provider for the decision-makers, and a champion of justice and equality for the Nation, and they do all of this at the local community level through its chapters in communities around the Nation.

This week, led by its president, Marc Morial, who is providing superb leadership to the Urban League in the tradition of the great Whitney Young, the League continues its legacy and consciousness-building. I hope my colleagues will be reminded of the importance of this group to our economic development. As they conference in the Nation's Capital, I hope we would reach out and listen to the proposals and solutions the League provides. I hope we would provide them a voice for and an ear to their causes.

Mr. Speaker, I submit the following article written by Zenitha Prince of the Afro-American concerning this week's meeting. I welcome the attendees and conferees of this year's conference to their Nation's Capital, Washington, DC.

URBAN LEAGUE CELEBRATES 95 YEARS

JULY 23, 2005—About 15,000 people are expected to join the National Urban League in "Celebrating 95 Years of Empowering Communities and Changing Lives" during its annual conference, which will convene at the Washington Convention Center in Washington, D.C., from July 27 to 31.

"As we celebrate 95 years of direct service to communities across the nation, we expect the annual conference in Washington, D.C., to be the largest gathering of the Urban League Movement," said Marc H. Morial, National Urban League president and CEO, in a prepared statement.

The annual conference will feature innovative and interactive plenary sessions and events that present some of the Nation's most illustrious and influential leaders. It also gives us a chance to discuss and find ways to help one another in closing the tremendous gaps that exist in health, education and economics. The annual conference helps bring people together around issues of concern to our community and the Nation.

Among the featured speakers are U.S. Sen. Hillary Clinton (D-N.Y.); hip-hop historian and author Kevin Powell; author, activist and comedian Dick Gregory; and Rainbow Coalition/PUSH founder and president the Rev. Jesse Jackson. The conference will also feature performances by India.Arie, Brian McKnight, Doug E. Fresh and Chuck Brown.

Most notably, however, the 2005 conference will feature a new Influencer Summit geared towards engaging, connecting and building young professionals. The list of speakers includes (The Apprentice) star Kwame Jackson, who plans to discuss how he parlayed his reality television experience into opportunities that include a new company, Legacy Holdings, which is even now brokering a \$3.8 billion deal to build a real estate development called Rosewood, just miles outside of the District of Columbia, and a lucrative career on the international speakers' circuit.

"I wouldn't be on this phone or have any notoriety if I had stayed on my job [with Wall Street firm Goldman Sachs]," said the 30-year-old D.C. native. Modestly deflecting any praise about his achievements, Jackson advised young entrepreneurs that corporate America is a tough environment for a young Black person, and that it takes tenacity and vision to attain success. "Being an entrepreneur is for people who enjoy getting their teeth kicked," Jackson said. "You have to be the kind of person that will get up and ask for more."

The Influencer Summit will also examine the changing civil rights landscape and the young Black professional's role in it.

"I think we're the up-and-coming leaders. Any civil rights movement from here on out will be carried out by us," said Larry Meadows Jr., president of the Washington National Urban League Young Professionals.

Both Jackson and Meadows agreed that the Black community is moving into the "second generation" of the civil rights struggle, which involves the fight for economic parity.

"We've grown by leaps and bounds, but if you look at it economically, we've not gone very far," Meadows said. "We have a lot of successful individuals, and that creates the perception that we're OK. But overall, we're still struggling."

For more information about the 2005 National Urban League Annual Conference, go

to www.nul.org; and for more information about Kwame Jackson, check out his Web site, www.kwamejackson.com.

PAUL KASTEN POST OFFICE BUILDING

HON. DENNIS R. REHBERG

OF MONTANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, July 26, 2005

Mr. REHBERG. Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank the Government Reform Committee and this body for joining me in recognizing one of my constituents, Paul Kasten, an employee of the U.S. Postal Service for the past 57 years.

Before his retirement this spring, at the age of 86, Paul Kasten had spent the last half-century serving eastern Montana. He began his postal career in 1947 riding a saddle horse to the farming community of Watkins.

In 1959, many of the rural routes consolidated expanding Mr. Kasten's route to 93 miles. Despite the immense distances, he would deliver regular mail to 30 families three times a week. His dedication and faithfulness earn him praise above which he will acknowledge. In addition to his mail deliveries, Paul would also deliver groceries, supplies, and anything that was needed by his rural customers. He was and is a valued and dedicated member of those communities.

Paul Kasten is a tribute to the entire U.S. Postal Service and I urge your support for his distinguished career. In honor of all his years of faithful service please join me in recognizing Mr. Kasten's achievements by designating the Brockway Post Office as the "Paul Kasten Post Office Building." Thank you.

HONORING KASSI SCOTT ON THE COMPLETION OF HER INTERNSHIP

HON. BART GORDON

OF TENNESSEE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, July 26, 2005

Mr. GORDON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the many contributions Kassi Scott made while interning in my Washington, DC, office. Kassi, a native of Moss, Tennessee, was a wonderful addition to the office and a great servant to the constituents of Tennessee's Sixth Congressional District.

Kassi soon will begin her junior year at Tennessee Tech University, where she is a political science major and president of the College Democrats.

Kassi has gained a wealth of congressional experience. She interned in my Cookeville, Tennessee, office prior to her internship in Washington. While in our Nation's capital, she attended briefings, addressed constituent concerns and served as a friendly and informative tour guide of the U.S. Capitol.

I hope Kassi enjoyed her internship as much as my staff and I have enjoyed her presence in the office. I wish her all the best in the future.

HONORING THE MEMORY OF THE
HON. L. DICK OWEN, JR.

HON. JO BONNER

OF ALABAMA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, July 26, 2005

Mr. BONNER. Mr. Speaker, Baldwin County, Alabama, and indeed the entire First Congressional District recently lost a dear friend, and I rise today to honor him and pay tribute to his memory.

Senator L. Dick Owen, Jr., was a devoted family man and dedicated public servant throughout his entire life. A native of Bay Minette, Alabama, he was a 1941 graduate of the University of Alabama in Tuscaloosa. Governor George Wallace appointed him to the position of Baldwin County Probate Judge in January 1964 following the death of his predecessor, Judge Ramsey Stuart. One year later, he was elected to the Alabama House of Representatives, where he served two terms before running for and winning two terms in the Alabama Senate. His work in the state legislature was met with wide praise, and he was honored by the Alabama Wildlife Federation as "Legislative Conservationist of the Year," and, in 1976, by the Alabama Press Association as "Most Effective Senator."

Senator Owen was also actively involved in his community and was a charter member of the Bay Minette Rotary Club. He was also honored in 1982 when the performing arts center of Faulkner State Community College—an institution which he helped locate in Bay Minette—was named the "L.D. Owen Performing Arts Center." His devotion to his fellow man was unmatched, and I do not think there will ever be a full accounting of the many people he helped over the course of his lifetime.

Senator Owen was also a proud veteran of the United States Army and served with distinction as a member of the famed 82nd Airborne Division during World War II, where he earned six Bronze Stars. During the Korean War, he returned to active duty, and in 1963 retired from the Army Reserve with the rank of lieutenant colonel.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in remembering a dedicated public servant and long-time advocate for Baldwin County, Alabama. Senator Owen will be deeply missed by his family—his wife, Annie Ruth Heidelberg Owen; his son, L.D. Owen, III; his brother, James R. Owen; his sister, Nell Owen Davis; his three grandchildren; and his two great-grandchildren—as well as the countless friends he leaves behind. Our thoughts and prayers are with them all at this difficult time.

GAZA: TEST CASE FOR PEACE

HON. BARNEY FRANK

OF MASSACHUSETTS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, July 26, 2005

Mr. FRANK of Massachusetts. Mr. Speaker, last week I opposed an amendment to the State Department Authorization Bill that would have put restrictions on the ability of the President to decide on the appropriate flow of aid to the Palestinian Authority, because I believe that a Palestinian Authority both willing and

able to confront violent opposition to the peace process with Israel is essential for peace to succeed. Later that day, after our debate, I read—a bit tardily—an excellent article that had been published in the Washington Post, for Wednesday, July 20, by the Israeli Ambassador to the United States, Daniel Ayalon. I believe that Ambassador Ayalon is an extremely able diplomat, who is himself a dedicated supporter of a rational process leading to a genuine two state solution in the Middle East. The article he wrote underlines the importance of a commitment by the Palestinian Authority to take the steps necessary to curtail the activities of those in the Palestinian community who are determined to bring the peace process to a violent halt.

As Ambassador Ayalon notes, Prime Minister Ariel Sharon has confronted those within Israel who are opposed to the peace process in general, and very specifically to the withdrawal of Jewish settlers from Gaza. This is of course, as the Ambassador points out, a cause of great anguish within Israel, and Prime Minister Sharon and his allies ought to be commended for the dedication to peace they are showing in their willingness to confront this opposition. It is entirely reasonable for Israel to ask, as Ambassador Ayalon does, for a comparable level of effort from President Abbas of the Palestinian Authority.

I do not mean by this to equate the opposition faced by President Abbas on the one hand and Prime Minister Sharon on the other. While I disagree strongly with those settlers who are seeking to derail the peace process, they have not in any significant degree resorted to the kind of murderous violence that has been the response of Hamas and others within the Palestinian community seeking to put an end to peace. I say that they are people seeking to put an end to the peace process, Mr. Speaker, because there is no other explanation for the decision to engage in terrorist murders of Israelis within Gaza while the Israeli Government is in fact in the process of withdrawing from Gaza. Individual Israelis are not the only victims of these murders—the peace process is also an intended victim.

I believe it is important for the United States to provide strong support for all those trying to go forward with this difficult peace process, and I think it is fair for Ambassador Ayalon to point out that the effort so far of President Abbas have fallen short of what Israel has a right to expect.

I will continue to oppose, as I did last week, measures that seem to me to undercut President Abbas' ability to go forward with this admittedly difficult task. At the same time, I think it is important for those of us who are strong supporters of the peace process to join in reminding President Abbas of the importance of his being more successful than he has in the past in this regard.

Mr. Speaker, I ask that Daniel Ayalon's article be printed here.

[From the Washington Post, July 20, 2005]

IN GAZA, A TEST CASE FOR PEACE

(By Daniel Ayalon)

Next month thousands of Israelis will be uprooted from their homes in 25 settlements, against the backdrop of widespread political opposition and intensifying Palestinian terrorism. Israel faces difficult days ahead.

Prime Minister Ariel Sharon is boldly determined to move forward with disengagement from Gaza and the northern West Bank

out of a deep conviction that it is critical to Israel's future. Unfortunately, the Palestinian leadership has failed to meet him halfway. The Palestinian Authority's refusal to disarm terrorist organizations has enabled the terrorists to regroup and renew deadly attacks against Israelis, compounding the difficulties of this engagement and casting an ominous shadow on the possibility of future progress.

The sharp increase in Palestinian terrorist attacks, particularly in the past week, underscores the precariousness of the situation. While Israel is committed to completing the disengagement as planned, we will not sit idly by while our civilians are under attack. Time is running out for the Palestinian leadership to confront the terrorists. Should it fail to do so, Israel will be forced to take the necessary steps to defend its people. Lest the Palestinians miss another historic opportunity, the world should insist that they crack down on terrorism now.

After numerous failed attempts by Israelis and Palestinians to reach peaceful accommodation over the past 15 years, Sharon decided to embark on a different course. Disengagement is an immense political, strategic and indeed historical undertaking, aimed at reducing friction between Israelis and Palestinians, jump-starting the peace process and providing the Palestinians with a unique opportunity to build institutions of responsible self-governance.

At the same time, it puts a terrible burden on thousands of Israelis called on to leave their homes against their will. Many have lived there for more than three generations. Specially trained, unarmed units will move from house to house as part of a massive logistical operation involving some 50,000 security personnel, accompanied by teams of social workers and psychologists. Living, breathing communities, some more than 30 years old, will simply vanish. Businesses, factories and farms will be shut down. Schools, synagogues and cemeteries will be relocated. The removal of graves, including those of terrorism victims, will be especially heart-wrenching.

The trauma of disengagement has unleashed dangerous rifts in Israeli society. While the withdrawal is supported by most of the public, many Israelis deeply oppose it on moral, religious and security grounds. Sharon has demonstrated steadfast leadership in the face of an unprecedented political backlash from his traditional supporters. Given the intense political opposition and growing civil disobedience, the prospect of violent resistance cannot be ruled out. Regardless of the outcome, the repercussions of disengagement will be felt in Israel for years. At stake is not only the success of disengagement but also the very fabric of Israeli society.

Adding fuel to the fire, public anxiety in Israel has increased because of the resurgence of Palestinian terrorism, including suicide bombings, drive-by shootings and rocket attacks. Rather than confront the terrorist organizations and disarm them, Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas has invited Hamas into his government, thereby providing a terrorist organization with an official seal of approval. The result has been an emboldened Hamas, a further weakening of the Palestinian Authority and a potentially disastrous perception that disengagement is a victory for terrorism rather than an opportunity for peace.

Abbas must seize the moment and lead the Palestinians toward peace. The terrorist organizations must be disarmed as called for in the "road map" if Palestinian statehood is to be achieved. This is nonnegotiable. Gaza is both the opportunity and the test for the Palestinian leadership. Will that leadership